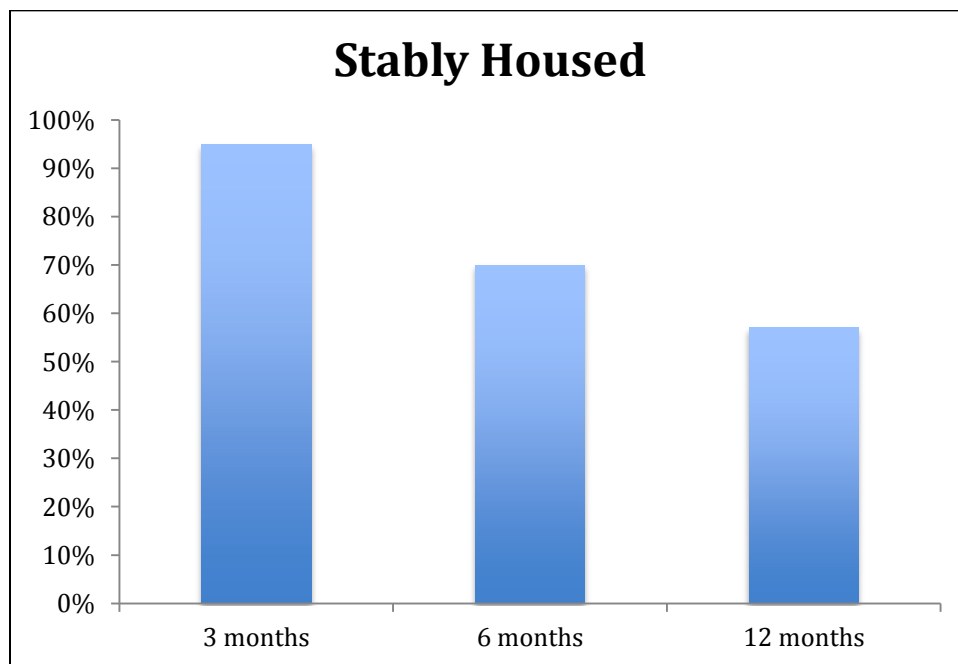




2013 Faith-Based Partnership to End Homelessness Update

The Community Alliance for the Homeless continues to make progress on the Mayors' Action Plan to End Homelessness. The task of preventing and ending family homelessness was jumpstarted in Memphis through the stimulus funded Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program. Although funding for this program ended in June 2012, it had demonstrated new and cost effective ways to reduce family homelessness. Community Alliance and its partners worked hard to sustain these strategies with new funding sources. Now called the Emergency Housing Partnership, the initiative includes the Mayors' Faith Based Partnership to End Homelessness.

Mayors' Faith Based Partnership program leverages funding and mentor teams from faith communities to rapidly rehouse and support homeless families. Though still in its infancy, the Faith Based Partnership has yielded strong outcomes. The majority of families have remained stably housed for 3, 6, and 12 months (only a handful have reached the 12-month mark at this writing). Families housed for 12 months have successfully completed the program. No family served by the Faith Partnership teams has returned to homelessness. Through a combination of the Mayors' Faith Based Partnership to End Homelessness and rapid rehousing strategies, including ongoing services as needed, over 90% of the families served through this program remained stably housed 12 months later. Fewer than 2% have returned to homelessness after receiving a maximum of three months of financial assistance and longer-term home-based supports – an amazing 98% success rate in ending homelessness among families.



Presently there are 27 churches and faith partners participating. A total of 22 families have been matched with mentors from the churches and faith partners. To date four families have successfully completed the program.

The Good News (shared by Faith Partner Daniel Johnson, Second Baptist Church):

“The young lady that we have been working with, is a good story about a family who has been rehoused and, with the help of the Faith Based Partnership to End Homelessness program, is on the road to stability and a successful future. Now, her and her boys are in no way out of the woods or living without struggles. Rent is still sometimes an issue. Transportation is a huge issue. Finding work without a GED is a struggle. Just learning how to shop at the grocery store or cook meals is an issue. In fact, she recently asked if some of our mentors could provide her with some recipes because she would like to cook better meals for her two boys. But, it’s taken us six months of relationship building to have the kind of trust where she is willing to make that kind of simple request to our mentor team; a request that some people could be embarrassed to admit.

I think another important aspect of the story is the impact this relationship is making on our mentors. Our mentors are people who have great hearts and a desire to serve but who, because of this relationship, are learning so much about how difficult and complicated it is to get out of poverty and learning about some of their own assumptions... like there is some kind of a quick fix. I loved hearing about a trip that one of our mentors went on with our mentee. She taught our mentee about pricing and how to decide what to buy and the mentor got a lesson in WIC benefits.” [Daniel Johnson, Second Baptist]



The Mayors’ Faith Based Partnership to End Homelessness is making great strides and continues to gain momentum.